Docket No. 70551/56898

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANTS: H. Saiga et al.

SERIAL NO. Concurrently Herewith EXAMINER: To Be Assigned

FILED: Concurrently Herewith GROUP: To Be Assigned

FOR: APPARATUS AND METHOD OF IMAGE CODING, APPARATUS AND

METHOD OF IMAGE DECODING, AND COMPUTER-READABLE RECORDING MEDIUM RECORDED WITH RESPECTIVE IMAGE

CODING AND DECODING PROGRAMS

Hon. Commissioner of Patents Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 (Express Mail Label No. **EL 933120270 US**), and is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on February 12, 2002.

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to its initial review, kindly amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1 to 21 without prejudice, and substitute therefor the following new Claims 22 to 57: